

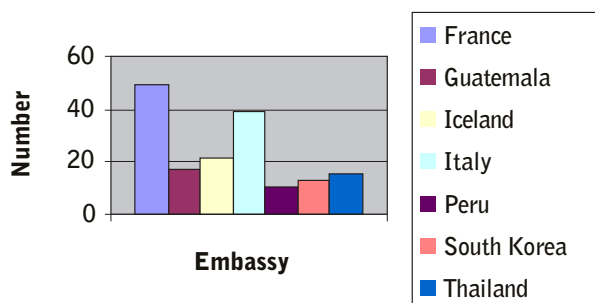
c o n s u l t a t i o n s

To assist and inform the diplomatic and consular communities

The Increased Role of Honorary Consuls in the United States

Many embassies are finding that having honorary consuls represent their country is a more cost-effective way to handle consular interests in the United States. There are now more than 920 honorary consuls representing diplomatic missions, almost double the number of career consuls. Honorary consuls are most often U.S. citizens with established contacts in the business world. OFM has recognized the important role of honorary consuls and is including them in its outreach activities. The chart below shows a sampling of missions who make use of honorary consuls.

Sampling of Embassies with Honorary Consuls



OFM Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Theodore Strickler addresses the Consular Corps College in Las Vegas, a convention of career and honorary consular officers accredited in the major cities of the United States. Embassies are increasingly making use of honorary consuls to represent their interests in the United States.

OFM's Twentieth Anniversary

Created by an Act of Congress on October 1, 1982, OFM is celebrating its twentieth year of operation. Plans are under way to observe the anniversary through a variety of outreach activities with the foreign diplomatic community throughout the United States. To commemorate the anniversary year, OFM has added a commemorative tag to its logo as seen on the right.



Updated Insert of Department of State Officials

We are again pleased to provide a list of Senior Department of State Officials.

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OFM Procedure

Letter on Diplomatic Couriers

TO: Foreign Mission Administrative Officers and Counselors

SUBJECT: Diplomatic Couriers

Dear Colleagues,

The Department of State has been working since the tragic events of September 11 with the Transportation Security Agency and individual airports to ensure that diplomatic pouches are shipped freely. Two recent incidents concerning diplomatic pouch shipments lead me to provide the following advice to missions that ship pouches accompanied by couriers.

Recently there have been two instances in which a diplomatic courier arrived at the ticket counter of a large airline. The courier identified himself **only** as a "courier" and requested that the pouch that he was transporting not be x-rayed. Unfortunately, he did not state that he was a "diplomatic courier" and the ticket agent assumed that he was a courier for a business corporation. Under the new, post-September 11 security rules, the courier was told that any luggage that was not his personal belongings could only be accepted at the Cargo Terminal. In both cases after carrying his pouch to the Cargo Terminal, the courier was told that all cargo accepted by an airline must come only from what are called "known shippers." This means that the owner/shipper of the cargo is a business organization that is registered with the new Transportation Security Agency of the U.S. Government. Of course, no foreign government or mission is "registered" as a "shipping company," so the courier was told that the pouch could not be accepted. Only after many telephone calls was this problem resolved and the courier permitted to board the aircraft with his pouch. The airline representative noted that dozens of commercial couriers travel with them every day and that the airline had acted in accordance with their rules for such commercial couriers.

The lesson here is that it is very important that couriers give a complete identification to airline personnel, so that it is understood that the courier is transporting diplomatic bags, not business or commercial papers. Couriers who fail to clearly identify themselves as **diplomatic** couriers will certainly cause a great deal of extra turmoil, and risk delaying the prompt shipment of the accompanied diplomatic pouch.

Respectfully yours,
John R. Arndt
Managing Director



Frequently Asked Questions



How to Obtain Tax Relief Before Purchasing a Vehicle

- Q.** Who is eligible to obtain tax exemption (sales, excise and luxury) on the purchase, registration, and/or titling of a vehicle?
- A.** Tax exemption is based on the status of one's assignment in the United States. Article 34 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and Article 49 of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, is the legal foundation for tax exemption privileges for foreign mission members and their dependents.
- Q.** What office is responsible for verifying tax exemption?
- A.** The Office of Foreign Missions, Diplomatic Motor Vehicle office, must make verification of tax exemption privileges.
- Q.** What is the procedure for obtaining exemption from payment of taxes?
- A.** To obtain verification of tax exemption privileges the purchaser should advise the dealership or financial institution that he/she is exempt from the payment of taxes. The dealership may then make verification by phone (202-895-3532) to the Diplomatic Motor Vehicle office and then follow by fax (202-895-3646).
- Q.** What document(s) are required from the dealership to obtain tax verification?
- A.** The dealership must fax the buyer's or purchase order, copy of the certificate of origin or title bearing the name of the mission or mission member as proof of intent to purchase the vehicle. The Diplomatic Motor Vehicle office will issue a letter certifying the exemption from payment of taxes (sales, excise and luxury) levied on the purchase, registration and/or titling of a vehicle. The letter will be mailed and/or at the dealership's request, may be faxed directly to the sales agent. The letter will allow the diplomat to purchase the vehicle without paying the taxes and will eliminate unnecessary out of pocket expenses.
- Q.** What purpose does the tax exemption letter to the dealership serve?
- A.** The tax relief letter provides proof of the tax exemption to the Internal Revenue Service on behalf of the dealership, if and whenever audited.
- Q.** What happens when a vehicle is registered in error with the state jurisdiction?
- A.** There is no tax exemption when state registration occurs. The tax exemption is only received when the vehicle is registered with the U.S. Department of State.

Faces of OFM



Gerald Hanisch

Gerald Hanisch joined OFM in April and will be coordinating with the Office of Overseas Buildings Operations (M/OBO) on obtaining VAT exemptions and refunds assessed on our overseas building projects. Mr. Hanisch is a member of the Foreign Service and has served in Nouakchott, Brussels, Kampala, Mbabane, Conakry, Canberra, Rome, and Geneva, and as a staff assistant in the "A" Bureau. He has just returned from a tour as the supervisory general services officer in Bangkok. Mr. Hanisch is a South Dakota native, and a graduate of both the University of South Dakota and Columbia University.



Carolyn Parker

Carolyn Parker was assigned as Deputy Director, under the directorship of Terry Daru, in the Miami Regional Office. Ms. Parker has been with the Department of State since 1988 when she was hired as building manager for Blair House (The President's Guest House) and other State building annexes. In 1990, Ms. Parker joined OFM as senior program officer in charge of custodial properties (chanceries and ambassador's residences) owned by foreign governments with which the U.S. no longer has diplomatic relations. Ms. Parker later served

in roles as Administrative Services Branch Chief for Department of State Information Management office and as OFM's Acting Director of Administration. Ms. Parker hopes to establish a cooperative relationship with all consulates that are part of the Miami regional office.

OFM Regional Office Activities

OFM Regional Director Addresses Convention of the Junior State of America



OFM/SF Deputy Regional Director Evan Reade presents a letter of appreciation from Secretary of State Powell to Mr. Harry Orbelian, founder and president of the San Francisco Global Trade Council.

Mr. Orbelian was honored for his many achievements at a reception and dinner at the City Club of San Francisco on March 25, 2002. OFM/SF obtained and presented a letter of congratulations at that event.

OFM Los Angeles Regional Director David van Valkenburg was the keynote speaker before an audience of 1,200 high school students from over 100 southern California high schools, all delegates to the semi-annual Convention of the Junior State of America (formerly the Junior Statesmen of America). Mr. van Valkenburg had been asked to speak on how heightened security concerns since September 11 have necessitated changes to the daily diplomatic and consular operations of the Department of State and of foreign consulates in the U.S. He also took the opportunity to describe the various career opportunities offered by the Department of State. The young delegates asked thoughtful and well-informed questions on both topics. These delegates may well be the American foreign policy constituency of the future.

The JSA theme, at the Los Angeles Convention and at similar events this month in Houston, Santa Clara, CA, Seattle, Stamford, Columbus, Chicago, Orlando and East Brunswick, NJ, is "As The World Wakes Up From History." The JSA was founded in 1934. More information is available at www.jsa.org.



OFM Los Angeles Regional Director David van Valkenburg addressed 1,200 teenage delegates of the Junior State of America at their semi-annual Convention. Their articulate questions indicated that these students, many of whom expressed interest in careers in international relations, have a lot to contribute to future American foreign policy.

Benefits from Membership in Social Clubs

In the Washington area, many social clubs offer memberships to those in the diplomatic community. These clubs offer a variety of benefits to their members including dining and lodging facilities with valet parking, athletics, and reciprocal membership opportunities not only in other U.S. states, but around the world as well.

Many of these clubs have long and rich histories. For example, William H. Taft founded the University Club of Washington in 1904, while he was Secretary of War. Four years later he was elected President.

Other clubs, like the Tower Club, offer excellent opportunities to experience world-class golf courses around the country.

The Club at Franklin Square hosts an Ambassador Breakfast Series, and the City Club has several ambassadors on their board of governors.

The relatively new George Washington University Club offers guided tours of the facility to interested parties. This club is exquisitely decorated with much of President Grant's own furniture and offers comfortable and accessible rooms for meetings or social events.

Many other clubs in the Washington metropolitan area provide similar opportunities. Although each club has its own requirements, some offer special rates to members of the

diplomatic corps. Most clubs do require a one-time fee up to \$500, with monthly dues up to \$50.

Members of the diplomatic corps are encouraged to contact the following social clubs in the Washington metropolitan area for membership information:

The Tower Club
8000 Towers Crescent Drive, 17th Floor
Vienna, Virginia 22182
Telephone: 703.761.4520
Web site: www.tower-tysons.com

The Club at Franklin Square
1300 I Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005
Telephone: 202.408.1300

The George Washington University Club
1918 F Street, NW
Washington, DC 20052
Telephone: 202.994.2355

City Club of Washington
555 13th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20004
Telephone: 202.347.0818
Web site: www.city-washington.com

The University Club
1135 16th Street
Washington, DC 20036
Telephone: 202.862.8800, ext. 340
Web site: www.universityclubdc.com

The Army and Navy Club
901 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20006
Telephone: 202.628.8400
Web site: www.armynavyclub.org



The Army and Navy Club in Washington



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